

In Search of Excellence in the
Office of Communications

1. The Office of Communications (OC) is seriously considering ways to strive for excellence in every undertaking that involves us. We are aggressively consulting with communications customers to ensure that they receive excellent support in the future without unduly burdening the taxpayer. This effort encompasses complex plans for new building communications systems, the recapitalization program and extensive crisis communications systems. Also included are refinements to our basic service, e.g., the reduction of paper as the Automated Printing and Reproduction System (APARS) and the SAFE system are more effectively used (present savings are \$10,000 per month). OC's most noteworthy effort towards excellence has been in the area of people and this year has been dedicated as the "Year of the People" to illustrate this emphasis.

2. OC is moving vigorously to recruit and retain more qualified people to accomplish its mission as well as provide an improved work environment. It is our intention to have sufficient staff to provide training time and leave periods while keeping our facilities staffed at reasonable strength levels so that work demands are tolerable. While working within the framework of our regulations, we have moved away from our traditional pattern of applying Agency financial regulations so literally and conservatively. This flexibility is being applied in the interest of our employees. In the quality of life area we have:

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b. Liberalized OC's policy concerning the provision of QP vehicles where local transportation does not meet our mission needs. OC personnel have traditionally been the first called to duty but the last on the QP vehicle list.

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d. Increased some benefits and are working to provide others [redacted] to offset high living costs and poor living conditions at this remote site.

e. Provided rental vehicles for up to five days of processing between tours for our overseas people. This will ease both the physical and fiscal burden of OC employees trying to process and train in a short period of time at diverse facilities.

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f. Funds were provided for improved air conditioning and modern bathroom fixtures in the living quarters [redacted] [redacted] We are now seeking \$400,000 for new furnishings for these quarters.

3. A great deal of energy and resources have and will continue to be expended to technically train OC employees to operate, maintain and manage the ever more complex communications network. We have recently moved to improve our training to go beyond the basic technical necessities:

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a. To improve the quality and readiness of our graduate communicators we have recently provided an extended training experience of up to one year, prior to assignment overseas, at [redacted] or in the Headquarters Center. This new opportunity provides a "hands-on" experience for new employees so they can develop operational knowledge prior to a field assignment. A reduced per diem rate has also been applied to this extended training period to offset the high cost of maintaining a temporary residence in this area.

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b. With the Office of Training and Education assistance, special offerings of behavioral training courses are scheduled for [redacted] OC employees between assignments this summer. This will be the first such opportunity for our overseas cadre to receive this type training on this scale. This effort will be continued.

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c. The Office provided an evening OC lecture series entitled the Mini-Masters covering subjects as diverse as personnel management, planning and budgetary processes, modern equipment usage, satellite and high frequency radio concepts [redacted] A real world approach was taken in these presentations by OC managers. Average class attendance was 48 with 27 employees qualifying for certificates by attending six of the eight lectures.

4. Just a few of the ways OC is moving to recognize and reward its employees for excellence on the job follow:

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a. Ten percent of OC employees received some form of cash award and/or certificate award during the past year.

b. OC is aggressively using its promotion headroom to promote more deserving employees and to ensure pay equity. In the past ninety days OC has upgraded or applied grade points to erase deferred grade allocations for more than [redacted] positions.

c. OC, with the Office of Personnel's assistance, is developing a "pay banding" proposal which will provide for a closer relation between performance and pay. This system

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will be tested on our communicator cadre of approximately [] employees and if it provides the incentives necessary to attract and retain personnel as expected, other groups will be included.

d. We are in the process of developing a monetary award for our singleton communicators who by necessity are confined to their post of assignment on a standby basis.

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5. OC is moving to change the image of our people. The fact that they are intelligence officers supporting an intelligence mission is being stressed. []

[] In addition, we are sending a variety of our key-skill people outside the Office on rotational assignments for the experience and to demonstrate to others the high caliber officer that OC produces.

6. The caliber of performance of OC employees under the most arduous circumstances is legend. In the past, their sheer stamina and self reliance filled the gaps in an old and fragile network. The Office is determined to inspire new members of this uniquely skilled group to seek the professional and personal achievement of their predecessors. And, to provide an organization which encourages the characteristics of excellence.